

REMARKS

Claims 25-28 and 37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Keith. Claims 29-34, 36 and 38 have been rejected by as being anticipated by Keith as described in an earlier office action. Claim 35 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keith. Applicant respectfully disagrees with these rejections.

This amendment is being presented after a final rejection in order to add a claim for consideration and to provide additional arguments in support of patentability.

Regarding the new claim, claim 38 clarifies the premolded lip feature of the connector. The lip is integral with the connector itself; it is not removable from the connector. The lips 32 of the Keith invention cannot be integral with the connector. Instead, the connector must be slid through the lip at some point during assembly, as the lip would not fit through the openings in the forms. Keith does not disclose a connector with an integral or premolded lip, thus Keith does not anticipate these claims.

In general, the Keith patent does not disclose the claimed features of applicant's invention. Applicant does not understand the Examiner's statements that the connector of Keith (106) has "elongated portions (fig.3; see front and back longitudinal sides which are perpendicular to upper web 92 and bottom web 22)." First, numeral 106 references the pointed end of the connector 92. Numeral 106 is not a connector. Also, numerals 92 and 22 appear on different connectors. Numeral 92 is one connector, but numeral 22 appears on the connector that goes completely through the forms (Fig. 1A).

Applicant cannot discern where the examiner finds the longitudinally extending portions that run from end to end. As best as applicant can determine, the examiner finds the longitudinally extending portions at the top side of the connector 92 (side closest to top of page) and the bottom of the connector (side closest to bottom of page). The top side and the bottom side are next to each other, but Applicant disagrees that the web (no reference numeral) connects the top side and the bottom side as claimed. Furthermore, applicant argues that the web (no reference numeral) of Keith does not run the length of the connector, as claimed. The web portion (no reference numeral) is limited to a small section of one end of the connector; it does not run from one end embedded (embedded in concrete) to the other

end (embedded in the other section of concrete). The claim limitation is clearly not met by any connector shown in Keith.

It would be very helpful if the examiner could, on Fig. 3 of Keith draw a guide showing the longitudinally extending portions that extend the length of the body and are connected by an internal web that also runs the length of the connector if Applicant's above understanding of the examiner's position is incorrect. The examiner provided such a drawing in conjunction with a previous office action mailed May 11, 2007 (regarding different prior art) and it was very helpful in understanding the examiner's analysis.

Regarding claim 25, the Keith reference does not disclosing anchorage surfaces adjacent each end. The examiner simply states that, with respect to claim 25, each connector has two anchorage ends. There are no anchorage surfaces adjacent the ends, as claim by Applicant and shown in Applicant's drawings by reference numeral 36. This claim is also not anticipated by the prior art.

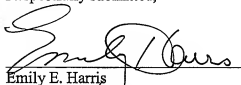
With respect to claim 35, the second connector in Keith shown in Fig. 1D does not disclose the anchoring surfaces transverse to the longitudinally extending portions, and furthermore, element 26 of Keith is a separate component than the connector, not a surface. Even if element 53 of Keith was considered an anchoring surface, it does not lie transverse to the longitudinally extending portions (especially as Keith does not have these claimed portions).

The Examiner is respectfully urged to call the undersigned attorney at (515) 288-2500 to discuss the claims in an effort to reach a mutual agreement with respect to claim limitations in the present application which will be effective to define the patentable subject matter if the present claims are not deemed to be adequate for this purpose.

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Respectfully submitted,



Emily E. Harris
Registration No. 56,201
DAVIS, BROWN, KOEHN,
SHORS & ROBERTS, P.C.

666 Walnut St., Suite 2500
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
Telephone: (515) 288-2500

ATTORNEYS FOR APPLICANT